

October 20, 2015

Office of Charter Schools  
6303 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-6303

Dear Deanna,

Several months ago I received a phone call from the Office of Charter Schools saying that additional charter schools had been approved for Union County. I was told that the new schools had been asked to contact me concerning the names they had chosen. At this time I have not heard from anyone about this matter.

I would like to say that we at Union Academy are proud to welcome additional high quality charter schools in our county because there are so many parents who want and deserve a school of choice for their children. It is very sad that Union Academy has to "wait list" and disappoint about 1500 applicants each year.

Union Academy was founded in the year 2000 and has been the first and only charter school in Union County for 15 years. We have worked hard to create a brand and name recognition for our school. It has taken us years to develop our name recognition to the point that we are often referred to as UA and everyone immediately associates this with Union Academy.

I am writing to you to express concerns that the Union Academy Board of Directors and I have with the name selections being chosen and approved for new charter schools in Union County.

The charter school names we have concerns with are Union Day School, Union Preparatory Academy (both approved to open in 2016), Union Leadership Academy that is in the approval phase and hopes to open in 2017, as well as any future charter schools.

We are most concerned with the latter two that use both the words "Union" and "Academy" in the name. We feel that this is going to be very confusing to the community, to the Department of Public Instruction and also to the Office of Charter Schools. There will be a lot of room for identity errors to be made in reports, information and general business transactions with three schools that have almost the same name.

Also, unfamiliar visitors and delivery vehicles can easily become confused if three building sites have basically the same name. Our preference would be that no other charter school in Union County use the words "Union" or "Academy" as part of their name to hopefully lessen the probability of identity confusion.

Please use whatever authority you have to be proactive and prevent these new schools from using our school's established name. Feel free to forward and share this with anyone who might have some influence on naming charter schools.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Ann Walters  
Headmaster